DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 161 127 95 EA 010 940

AUTHOR	Jones, Diane
TITLE	Measuring and Improving Group Effectiveness. Keys to Community Involvement Series: 11.
INSTITUTION	National School Public Relations Association, Arlington, Va.; Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, Oreg.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jan 78
CONTRACT	400-76-0025
NOTE	39p.; For related documents, see EA 010 930-944
AVAILABLE FROM	National School Public Relations Association, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209 ($2.00; $24.00 for set of 15 Keys; discounts available; payment must accompany order)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Citizen Participation; Communication Skills; *Community Involvement; Decision Making; Goal Orientation; *Group Dynamics; *Group Relations; Group Unity; *Organizational Effectiveness; Problem Solving; *Work Sheets

ABSTRACT

This booklet is for people who want to improve the effectiveness of groups: group leaders, facilitators, and group members. Some of the basic factors that influence how effectively a group works together are briefly described. Factors that affect group effectiveness fall into two categories: those that affect the way group members accomplish tasks, and those that affect the way members create and maintain satisfaction with group activities. Instruments are provided to help identify areas of group performance that are working well and areas that need improvement. (Author/MLF)

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Keys to Community Involvement Series

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A Publication of the National School Public Relations Association

January 1978

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This publication is not printed at the expense of the Federal Government.

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

KEYS TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

MEASURING AND IMPROVING GROUP EFFECTIVENESS

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National School Public Relations Association
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank the following Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory staff members for their assistance: Robert G. Green, Managing Editor; Bonnie Holt, Coordination and Production Assistance; Chris Brown and Dee Rowe, Manuscript Typing; and Warren Schlegel, Cover Design and Illustrations.

Also acknowledged are the contributions of the Laboratory's Rural Education Program staff members whose work forms the basis of the *Keys to Community Involvement* booklets. Suggestions and comments from a number of people in western communities, schools and organizations have also been invaluable in shaping the ideas that are contained in these materials.

ABOUT THE SERIES

Keys to Community Involvement is a series of booklets developed for governing boards, community leaders, group members, administrators and citizens. The booklets are designed to help these audiences strengthen their skills in group processes, work cooperatively with others, and plan and carry out new projects. Topics include techniques to maintain enthusiasm in a group, ways that agencies can effectively use consultants, and factors that affect introducing and implementing new projects.

The booklets are written by members of the Rural Education Program of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. The Laboratory is a nonprofit, educational research and development corporation, headquartered in Portland, Oregon.

The booklets in the series are adapted from a much more comprehensive set of materials and training activities developed and field tested by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory over the past several years in dozens of locations throughout the western United States.

Information about other booklets in this series--titles and how to order--as well as information about related services--training, workshops and consultation--can be found on the inside and outside back covers of this booklet.

INTRODUCTION

Today, much of the work that is done, the learning that takes place and the decision making that occurs is accomplished in the context of a group. All kinds of groups are active--citizens advisory councils, neighborhood associations, formal and informal learning groups and work groups of many kinds. With so much taking place in groups, the capacity of a group to be effective, that is, the capacity of members to accomplish work in ways that are satisfying to all, has become increasingly important.

However, if your experiences have been like those of most people, you've undoubtedly been a part of groups that have been more productive, satisfying and successful than others. In some groups the climate or atmosphere is positive, the work goes smoothly and members seem to enjoy working together. In other groups, meetings often seem pointless, decisions are delayed, time and energy is wasted and the climate is cold and impersonal.

This booklet is for people who want to improve the effectiveness of groups: group leaders, facilitators and group members. While this booklet is not a comprehensive discussion of all the forces that affect group work and satisfaction,

some of the basic factors that influence how effectively a group works together are briefly described. In addition, instruments are provided to help identify areas of group performance that are working well and areas that need improvement.

FACTORS OF GROUP EFFECTIVENESS

While many aspects of group life are still the subject of study, several factors have been identified that affect group effectiveness. Generally, such factors fall into two categories:

- those which affect the way group members accomplish tasks
- those which affect the way members create and maintain satisfaction with group activities.

For example, suppose a group is established to raise money for a new community recreational facility. In order for the group to accomplish its tasks with little time and energy wasted, members must be able to communicate with one another and feel good about working together. In other words, to be effective and ensure a balance between accomplishing tasks and maintaining group satisfaction, a group must attend to both functions.

The next section looks at one of the important functions of a group: *accomplishing tasks*.

IMPROVING TASK ACCOMPLISHMENT

Most groups are formed with a charge or around an issue of common concern. This focal point gives a group a sense of its mission or task. Success in accomplishing tasks depends upon some group characteristics as well as some individual behaviors.

GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

An effective group has a clear understanding of its purpose and goals. Because members frequently have different interpretations of the group's purpose and may have goals that differ sharply from one another, the importance of members sharing their views and coming to some common agreements of what the group is about and where it's headed cannot be overemphasized. Unclear and misunderstood goals can seriously limit a group's effectiveness.

If the purpose of the group and its goals are clear and all members are committed to them, then members are able to focus their energies on the tasks and are in a position to continuously check the group's progress against the stated goals.

The instrument on the following page can be used by your group to assess whether or not goals are clearly stated, whether they are commonly understood by members and how the goals have been determined. This instrument is only a sample; feel free to modify it or create a new one that may meet the needs of your group more directly.

Instrument #1

ANALYZING GROUP GOALS

Directions: Answer the following questions by placing a check (✓) in the box and writing down what you think. The instrument is most useful if all members complete it. The information can then be examined in light of how all members view the group's goals and how they are formulated.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. Does your group have goals for its work that most members agree with?	☐	☐	☐
2. Are the goals stated or written down anywhere?	☐	☐	☐

3. In your own words write down your group's goals.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Do you feel the goals are appropriate and suitable for the group?	☐	☐	☐
5. Do you feel the goals are realistic and attainable for this group?	☐	☐	☐
6. Do the goals meet your individual needs?	☐	☐	☐
7. Did you have an opportunity to formulate or influence the goals?	☐	☐	☐
8. Does your group periodically review and revise its goals?	☐	☐	☐

An effective group makes decisions that are based on data and to which all members feel committed. The quality of a decision depends on the data used to make it. Two kinds of data are important for making decisions: (1) data related to members' feelings and perceptions, and (2) data related to knowledge and experience.

Several factors influence personal feelings and perceptions. People's logic, their intuition, and their immediate feelings about the situation are all part of their decision making. For example, if a project staff is trying to decide how to budget its limited financial resources, members' feelings about their own job security or the value they place on certain efforts will affect their decision.

Information about what people know and what they have seen or experienced is also an important part of quality decision making. For example, suppose a group is debating about what method to use for a community survey and several members say that mailed questionnaires have not worked in the past. The group can use this information to consider some other ways that are likely to produce better results or ask an outside consultant to help them select an appropriate survey method.

Finally, it is important that members accept and support group decisions. Such support can range from the willingness to abide by and not sabotage the decision to taking on the responsibility for carrying out the tasks involved. When all members have an

opportunity to influence or make group decisions, those affected by the decision are more likely to support it and feel responsible for the decision.

The following instrument can be used to examine the decision-making procedures of your group. By collecting and discussing this kind of information, your group can plan ways to modify or improve its decision-making procedures. For more information about group decision making see Booklet 2, "Group Decision Making: Styles and Suggestions."

Instrument #2

ASSESSING DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES

Directions: For each method of decision making, check how frequently it is used by your group. Compile the responses of all group members and present them to the group.

Kind of Decision Making	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Unanimity--everyone agrees that a proposed course of action is the best choice	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Consensus--everyone agrees on a course of action, with perhaps some stated reservations, at least for a specified time period	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Majority support--the majority of people agree, often demonstrated by voting	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Minority support--a minority of people agree, with tacit agreement or lack of open disagreement by the remaining members	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Handclasp--one or two members actively support and lead group to action	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Topic jump--the topic shifts before an explicit decision is reached	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Self-authorization--one person initiates action, with implicit consent or no overt disagreement of other members	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Plop--one person initiates action, but the group does not respond one way or another; by default, no action is taken	☐	☐	☐	☐

An effective group systematically identifies and solves problems. All groups face some kind of problems: members don't know how to plan a budget; there aren't enough volunteers to conduct a door-to-door survey; or there is too much to do for the time available. A group can build its effectiveness in solving problems by applying some step-by-step procedures such as those that are shown in Figure 1.

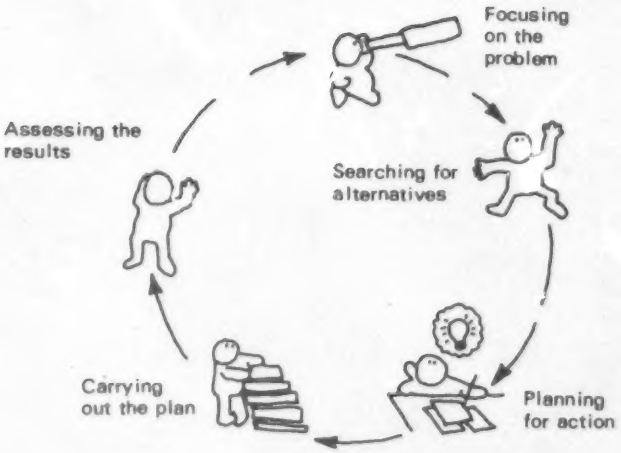

Figure 1: Problem-Solving Steps

For example, suppose a group is planning to conduct a neighborhood survey to find out who wants to participate in a community gardening program. The group needs 20 volunteers to conduct the door-to-door survey; only eight people have volunteered so far. The problem, then, is to find 12 more volunteers.

The next step is to examine various ways to find the needed volunteers--advertise on the radio; post notices in local businesses or in the newspaper; or have members ask their friends and neighbors if they are interested in volunteering for the job--and select one or two of these as a way to solve the problem.

Once a solution is selected, the next step is to plan how to carry it out. If the group has decided to post notices in the local newspaper and advertise for volunteers on the radio, plans would need to be made for writing the notices, contacting the newspaper and radio station, deciding how those interested in volunteering should contact the group, and so on.

Finally, the plan is carried out and the results are evaluated. Evaluation can focus on the following factors:

- Procedures--were all the planned tasks carried out? Were some modified? Were some added or dropped?

- Timelines--did things occur on time?

- Cost--was the total cost higher or lower than expected?

- Goals--did we achieve our goal? Did the goal change? Were there any unexpected results?

Problem solving is not difficult nor does it have to take a long time. In the example cited above, the steps were somewhat exaggerated to clearly illustrate the kind of activity that occurs in each step; most of the steps (except for carrying out the plan and evaluation which would be done a little later) could be completed during a meeting.

To use a problem-solving approach fruitfully, a group should keep the following in mind:

1. *Make sure there is a common understanding of the problem.* If some members view the problem as a lack of time and others feel the problem is based on insufficient skills, efforts to resolve it will likely be unsuccessful since members will be seeking solutions for different problems.

2. *Do each problem-solving step.* Frequently groups jump from identification of the problem to implementing a solution. Searching and planning are important steps and should not be omitted. They help a group carefully examine some possible ways and means to resolve a problem.

The following checklist (Instrument #3) can be used to help your group identify the problem-solving steps it is using and ones that could use some improvement.

Instrument #3

ASSESSING A GROUP'S PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

Directions: Read each item and check (√) which ones are working well and which ones need improvement. The group's assessment can be used to set goals for improving the group's problem-solving effectiveness.

Problem-Solving Activities: This Group Can	Doing All Right	Needs Improvement
1. surface and clarify problems or needs		
2. state problems or goals clearly		
3. identify blocking or restraining forces		
4. gather information about possible solutions		
5. generate criteria for successful solutions		
6. identify alternative solutions		
7. apply criteria to make choices		
8. develop step-by-step "Action Plans" for carrying out a solution		
9. identify resource needs		
10. locate and use resources		
11. develop a way to assess results		
12. monitor progress in task accomplishment		
13. change and adapt as circumstances prescribe		
14. evaluate the results of the effort		

For a more detailed description of problem solving, see Booklet 3, "Problem Solving: A Five-Step Model."

An effective group uses resources. Groups that explore as well as use a diversity of resources are usually quite efficient in accomplishing their tasks. Resources of all kinds (people, time, money, materials, etc.) are viewed as tools or supports for getting the work done.

An effective group also utilizes the differing abilities and viewpoints of its members as important resources. The success of any group depends on variety, fresh perspectives and original ideas. A group can capitalize on the rich resources of its members by respecting differences of opinion and maintaining a willingness to consider individuals' contributions.

By attending to these characteristics--clarifying the group's purpose and goals, making data-based decisions that members can support, systematically identifying and resolving problems and using resources--a group will greatly enhance its ability to successfully complete tasks.

However, studies of group behavior also reveal a number of *individual behaviors* that, if performed by group members, can help a group accomplish its tasks.

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS

Five kinds of individual behaviors are important to groups. Ideally, all members of a group--not just the leader--should be capable of performing these behaviors.

Initiating. Whether it is the first meeting of a group or the group is bogged down, someone gets the group going. Often the leader will have an initiating role and will offer a statement of purpose, suggest a procedure or propose a new idea. As a group continues to work, initiating behaviors

will likely be shared by more and more of its members. For example, to get a discussion started someone might say, "Lynne has presented her plan and I'd like to check how others feel about it. What do each of you think about the plan?"

Seeking and giving information or opinions. In order to make progress, the group must get information. To do this, individuals request facts, express feelings, describe actions, suggest next steps and so on. Members offer comments like, "I need to know how much money we have in our budget before I can vote on the proposal," or "I feel really confused about the issue we're discussing."

Clarifying and elaborating. Members of the group will need to interpret ideas or suggestions, check their level of understanding, clear up confusion, define terms, and discuss issues and alternatives as a part of completing a task. For example, someone might say, "I think Joe's idea means that our services would be available to more people."

Summarizing and recording. To prevent ideas and discussion points from being lost, summarizing needs to take place. Often at the beginning of a group's life, the leader fills this function. He or she pulls together related ideas, reviews the points that have been made and the feelings that have been expressed and when appropriate, makes sure they are written down or recorded. This function ensures that ideas and impressions are not lost because of either the size of the group or the length of time available.

Consensus testing. In order to keep moving along, someone needs to ask, "Are we ready to make a decision?" Consensus testing can also mean voicing an opinion: "I've heard three alternatives, and it seems we're moving toward option number one. Am I right?" This is a matter of sending up trial balloons to test a possible decision.

In most groups, successful accomplishment of tasks does not evolve automatically. It takes a lot of conscious effort, focused on the factors just discussed as well as those in the next section.

BUILDING GROUP SATISFACTION

In addition to completing a task, a group needs to be able to take care of relationships among its members. This section addresses the second major function of a group: *building and maintaining satisfaction in the group.*

An effective group pays attention to how tasks are pursued, how satisfied members are with the group's procedures, and what the general climate or atmosphere of the group is. For example, if a group is preparing a community survey or learning about state land-use laws, problems may emerge that do not seem directly related to the task. A discussion about survey techniques may become dominated by two or three people; several side conversations may become disruptive; or suggestions may be ignored or attacked before they are completely expressed.

When such problems occur, the group needs to shift from pursuing its tasks to examining its own processes and procedures. Effective groups readily move back and forth between task and process.

Three elements that researchers and practitioners have found to significantly affect group satisfaction and processes include:

- Group communication
- Group norms
- Group cohesion

Each of these elements as well as some individual behaviors that promote group satisfaction are described in more detail below.

GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

Group communication. One of the most important processes in any group is how members communicate with one another. Who communicates? How often? Are messages clear or misunderstood? Communication refers to verbal--written and spoken words--and nonverbal expressions--tone of voice, body posture, and gestures.

Communication requires more than just good will. Members must be able to state their ideas clearly, describe their feelings and seek information about what others are thinking and feeling. The following are suggestions for ways group members can work toward clear and accurate communication.

1. *Listen actively to one another.* Sometimes what you think you hear is not what another is trying to say. Check the accuracy of your listening by asking others to clarify their ideas or by paraphrasing statements made by others in the group. By checking your understanding and telling the speaker

your reaction to the comments, you are helping the speaker know whether or not others understand what he or she says.

2. *Ensure everyone the opportunity to speak.* Some members are naturally more talkative than others. However, when a few constantly dominate group discussions, there is a danger that others' ideas, feelings or opinions, which may be quite beneficial to the group, will never be shared. Monitoring who participates in group discussions enables you and other members to identify discussion patterns and, if necessary, modify them to make sure everyone has a chance to speak.

3. *Share ideas and feelings openly.* Withholding information or reactions can adversely affect any group or delay its progress. However, the degree to which you and others in the group feel free to share information depends largely on the level of trust among group members and how the group responds to individuals' contributions. If your comments are ignored or put down, you will think twice before sharing your thoughts. On the other hand, if your contributions are at least acknowledged, then you are more likely to openly share your ideas, feelings and opinions.

4. *Pay attention to body language.* Gestures and body positions may seem trivial, but they can carry some very powerful messages. A nod of the head can communicate support and agreement whereas a certain facial expression

may convey rejection. Try to identify some nonverbal behaviors in your group that are both helpful and hindering in promoting cooperation.

5. *Give and receive feedback.* It can be very useful for you to share your thoughts and feelings with another person whose behavior is impacting or affecting you. However, necessary ingredients are trust and a genuine concern to be helpful to each other. Feedback should involve a clear report of the facts, feelings, or a description of actions (rather than interpretations or inferences) and be given at a time when both parties agree to discuss and listen to one another.

The following instrument can be used or adapted to assess how members are communicating in a group and to plan activities for improving members' communication skills.

Instrument #4

ASSESSING GROUP COMMUNICATION

Directions: Answer the following questions on the basis of your participation in and experience with this group. A compilation of all members' responses may be used to pinpoint communication problems.

	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
1. I ask questions when I don't know something.	____	____	____
2. I keep my real thoughts and feelings to myself.	____	____	____
3. I have opportunities to talk during group discussions.	____	____	____
4. When I feel irritated or impatient with what's going on, I communicate my feelings to the group.	____	____	____
5. If I am unsure about what someone means, I relay my understanding of their comment and check to see if my understanding is accurate.	____	____	____
6. I withhold personal feelings and stick to the facts in a discussion.	____	____	____
7. I agree with another individual or like what they say without letting them know.	____	____	____
8. I listen to and carefully consider others' ideas.	____	____	____
9. I ask others to tell me what they really think of my work.	____	____	____
10. I ask others who seem to be hurt or upset to express their feelings.	____	____	____

Group Norms. The operating procedures--the rules and standards a group establishes--greatly influence a group's communication and cohesiveness. Norms or standards are the expectations and assumptions that members have about the kinds of behaviors, actions, and feelings that are right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate. Examples of group norms are:

- All meetings are held in the same place.
- Members do not challenge the ideas or opinions of the leader.
- Members dress informally for meetings.
- Positive as well as negative feelings are openly shared.
- The role of the chairperson is rotated periodically.

All norms provide a framework for the kinds of behaviors and actions that are acceptable in the group. Some norms are *explicit*, which means they are stated or written down and are understood by all members. Other norms are *implicit*, which means they are not verbalized or recorded anywhere and may or may not be commonly understood. Because members' expectations and ideas about norms are likely to differ among one another, it is advisable to have as many norms open and stated as possible. Stating norms enables members to select and agree on the ones they want to adopt for the group and helps members avoid difficulties that often arise from misconceptions and misunderstandings of what

they think is expected and acceptable. When norms are clearly understood and agreed upon, members are likely to express more satisfaction with the group.

Norms are often established around such matters as the following:

- *Use of time*--Is it a norm for meetings to begin on time?
- *Planning*--Is there an agenda for the meeting? Who participates in building the agenda?
- *Decision making*--Are decisions normally made by one person? By vote? By consensus?
- *Relationships*--Are members formal or casual? On a first-name basis?
- *Communication*--Do members openly share ideas and feelings with one another? Are discussions dominated by a few?

Norms significantly influence the ways in which group members work together and interact with one another. The following instrument can be used to periodically review a group's norms or to help diagnose misunderstandings or disagreements that may be related to norms.

Instrument #5

GROUP NORMS

Directions: Each member should complete the following items. Compile and share the data with the entire group. Members' comments that differ or are contradictory, which could become a source of conflict, can be dealt with by the group.

1. Based on my understanding, the stated norms of this group are: ___

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. From my point of view, the unstated norms of this group are: ____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Current norms that I would like to see changed or eliminated are:

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Norms that I would like to see created or added are: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Group Cohesiveness. Cohesiveness refers to the "we" feeling a group possesses and the sense of "belonging" that group members share. In groups with high cohesiveness, the communication between members is generally effective, intense and valued.

The following are four ways to build group cohesiveness:

1. *Identify with your group.* Think of your group as a team rather than a collection of separate individuals. Recognize your common purpose and talk about what we can do rather than what I can do.

2. *Build a group tradition.* Once a group forms, it begins to create its own history. By creating traditions or customs that members like, feel proud of and are enthusiastic about, group cohesiveness is strengthened. Examples might be a monthly social gathering or annual awards and commendations for services.

3. *Get the group to recognize good work.* A group that appreciates the efforts of its members will promote a feeling of acceptance and caring. When good work occurs, compliment the individuals responsible, mention their contributions in newspaper articles, or give awards for outstanding accomplishments.

4. *Set clear, attainable group goals.* Each group is likely to have long-range goals. The group also establishes short-term goals. For example, "The

goal for this meeting is to decide what to do about unnecessary student noise in the halls." End-of-the-meeting or weekly reports on goals that have been met increase a group's sense of accomplishment.

In cohesive groups, members feel a strong kinship to one another. In a sense, every member is essential to the group. If someone is late or absent, the group may feel incomplete and less able to function.

Instrument 6 on page 24 can be useful in discussing the degree to which members feel included and a vital part of the group.

Instrument #6

ASSESSING GROUP COHESIVENESS

Directions: Please give your opinion for each item by circling the appropriate number. Compile the data from individual responses, post the results and discuss them as a group.

1 = Strongly Agree

2 = Agree

3 = Undecided

4 = Disagree

5 = Strongly Disagree

	SA	A	U	D	SD
a. Members are committed to the purpose and goals of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Communication is open and honest in this group.	1	2	3	4	5
c. What I say is recognized and valued in this group.	1	2	3	4	5
d. Members display a high degree of mutual trust.	1	2	3	4	5
e. Members are genuinely concerned about one another.	1	2	3	4	5

Each of these elements--group communication, group norms and group cohesiveness--significantly affect group interaction and the degree to which members can work together to accomplish tasks.

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS

Again, there are some individual actions that members can take to help the group pay attention to how it's working and build and maintain satisfying relationships and experiences within the group.

Harmonizing--getting people to explore their differences in a non-threatening way, reconciling disagreement or reducing tensions.

Gatekeeping--ensuring that everyone gets a chance to speak. All of us have been in groups where one person continually interrupts. When this happens, less assertive people tend to withdraw from the discussion. The gatekeeper helps to keep communication channels open, facilitates the participation of all those present and suggests procedures that permit sharing remarks.

Encouraging--establishing a climate of acceptance by responding to other members and acknowledging their contributions.

Compromising--offering a compromise that allows individuals to maintain some status and self-respect while admitting error, particularly when communication has broken down or tempers flare. Compromise is often necessary in order to maintain group cohesiveness and productivity.

Diagnosing and norm testing--assessing the satisfaction of the group with the procedures and norms which have been created. This is a time for the group to look at its

procedures and review areas of dissatisfaction in order to identify necessary changes or reward itself for effective actions.

As members perform these activities, they help a group give consideration to each member and maintain good relationships among all members. Each member, not just the leader, is encouraged to use these techniques so that all can have a part in increasing the effectiveness of the group.

CONCLUSION

In this booklet ideas about what influences group effectiveness and sample instruments for measuring such elements have been presented. By using this information and the instruments, a group can identify what aspects of their group are working well, pinpoint what needs improvement and plan activities to increase overall effectiveness.

In addition to the instruments included in the text, two more sample instruments which incorporate and combine many of the concepts presented in this booklet have been included in the appendix. Feel free to modify these to meet your needs.

Finally, the *Keys to Community Involvement* Series includes other booklets related to effective group functioning that may be of interest. They are:

9. "Effective Groups: Guidelines for Participants"

10. "Group Progress: Recognizing and Removing Barriers"

15. "Group Leadership: Understanding, Guiding and Sharing"

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APPENDIX

Sample #1

EFFECTIVE GROUP SURVEY*

Group leaders, group facilitators, and group members may sometimes want to assess the group's capability for working productively. This survey can be used by one or many, with the results posted and discussed toward the end of a meeting.

Directions: Circle the letter opposite each item on the survey below that best describes, for you, the group's interactions.

The scale used is:

A = All group members
B = Most group members (two-thirds or more)
C = About half the group members
D = A few group members (one-third or fewer)
E = None of this group

During this (or the most recent) session, how many group members, including yourself:

	All	Most	Half	Few	None
1. Gave due consideration to all seriously intended contributions of other group members?	A	B	C	D	E
2. Checked (by paraphrasing, etc.) to make sure they knew what was really meant before agreeing or disagreeing?	A	B	C	D	E
3. Spoke only for themselves and let others speak for themselves?	A	B	C	D	E
4. Viewed all contributions as belonging to the group, to be used or not as the group decided?	A	B	C	D	E
5. Had the opportunity to participate in the group if they desired to do so?	A	B	C	D	E
6. Tried to find the reason if the group was having trouble getting work done?	A	B	C	D	E
7. Helped the group make decisions openly rather than by default?	A	B	C	D	E
8. Helped bring conflict into the open so the group could deal with it?	A	B	C	D	E
9. Looked upon behavior which hindered group process as a group problem, rather than as a "problem member?"	A	B	C	D	E

*Reprinted from Systematic and Objective Analysis of Instruction Training Manual. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1970.

Sample #2

ASSESSING MEETINGS*

The following questionnaire measures reaction to meetings. Please consider what usually or never happens in most of your group's meetings. For each item below, circle the number that indicates how often the thing happens that is mentioned in the item.

5 This is very typical of this meeting; it happens repeatedly.
4 This is fairly typical of this meeting; it happens quite often.
3 This is more typical than not, but it doesn't happen a lot.
2 This is more untypical than typical, though it does happen some.
1 This is quite untypical; it rarely happens.
0 This is not typical at all; it never happens.

	Never					Repeatedly
1. When problems come up in the meeting, they are thoroughly explored until everyone understands what the problem is.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. The first solution proposed is often accepted by the group.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. People come to the meeting not knowing what is to be presented or discussed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. People ask why the problem exists and what the causes are.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. There are many problems which people are concerned about which never get on the agenda.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. There is a tendency to propose answers without really having thought the problem and its causes through carefully.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. People bring up extraneous or irrelevant matters.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. The average person in the meeting feels that his or her ideas have gotten into the discussion.	0	1	2	3	4	5

*Adapted and reprinted by permission from Richard Schmuck, Philip Runkel, S. Saturen, R. Martel, and C. B. Derr, Handbook of Organization Development in Schools. Palo Alto, California: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1972.

	Never					Repeatedly
9. Someone summarizes progress from time to time.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Decisions are often left vague--as to what they are, and who will carry them out.	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Either before the meeting or at its beginning, any group member can easily get items onto the agenda.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. People are afraid to be openly critical or make good objections.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. People do not take the time to really study or define the problem they are working on.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. The same few people seem to do most of the talking during the meeting.	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. People hesitate to give their true feelings about problems which are discussed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. When a decision is made, it is clear who should carry it out, and when.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. There is a good deal of jumping from topic to topic--it's often unclear where the group is on the agenda.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. The same problems seem to keep coming up over and over again from meeting to meeting.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. People don't seem to care about the meeting, or want to get involved in it.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. When the group is thinking about a problem, at least two or three different solutions are suggested.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. Some very creative solutions come out of this group.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. When conflicts over decisions come up, the group does not avoid them but really stays with the conflict and works it through.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. The results of the group's work are not worth the time it takes.	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Never					Repeatedly
24. People feel very committed to carrying out the solutions arrived at by the group.	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. People feel antagonistic or negative during the meeting.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. There is no follow up on how decisions reached at earlier meetings worked out in practice.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Solutions and decisions are in accord with the chairman's or leader's point of view, but not necessarily with that of the members.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. There are splits or deadlocks between factions or subgroups.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. The discussion goes on and on without any decision being reached.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. People feel satisfied or positive during the meeting.	0	1	2	3	4	5

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